

Statement on the Violence Against Political Activists in Cambodia

25 April 2023

The **Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC)**, express our deepest concerns and condemn the recent acts of violence against political activists. Over the past months, ADHOC received many reports of attacks against political activists, ten of whom were Candlelight Party activists. These attacks have been perpetrated in different forms, including hitting activists with sticks, beating, stoning, cutting them with knives, and kicking activists' motorcycles. The attacks caused both minor and severe injuries, including one death in 2022. In the last 3 years, ADHOC have received more than 40 reports of political activists being attacked in a similar way.

In addition, we are also concerned about public authorities' failure to take concrete actions to protect political activities' human rights and prosecute the perpetrators of the attacks. Impunity undermines the rule of law, facilitates further attacks, creates an atmosphere of insecurity, and discourages civic participation which was stated in the Criminal Code and the Constitutional Law of Cambodia. This is deeply worrisome, particularly in light of the upcoming National Election.

To ensure a domestic environment conducive to civic participation and full and universal protection of the rights to life, freedom of expression, and physical integrity in accordance with the Constitutional Law of Cambodia, ADHOC strongly urge all relevant public authorities to take concrete, deliberate, and targeted measures to prevent future attacks against political activists and to hold perpetrators of previous attacks accountable. We urge public authorities to take these measures as expeditiously as possible to ensure the right of every citizen to participate in the upcoming national election.

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